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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2482

Nov. 2, 1990

KILLER COTTON -- USDA scientists have genetically engineered cotton so it wards off caterpillars as well as cotton sprayed with insecticides. USDA did the first outdoor tests of transgenic cotton this summer in Mississippi, Texas, Arizona & California. After eating the transgenic cotton, the caterpillars came down with a fatal case of indigestion. "Nearly all the caterpillars died within four days," says USDA Plant Geneticist Johnie Jenkins. The new technology might save cotton growers \$50 to \$75 per acre on insecticide used against tobacco budworms & related caterpillars, Jenkins says. **Contact: Johnie Jenkins (601) 323-2230.**

OUTLOOK AVAILABLE ON SATELLITE -- On Tuesday, Nov. 27, USDA will televise briefings from its Agricultural Outlook Conference. The briefings will be available via satellite from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., EST. Viewers can receive the broadcasts on: Westar V, transponder 11X, channel 22, frequency 4140 megahertz & audio 6.2/6.8. Test & tone will begin at 10 a.m. Secretary of Agriculture **Clayton Yeutter** & Deputy Secretary of State **Lawrence S. Eagleberger** will open the televised briefings at 10:30 a.m. **Contact: Ray Bridge (202) 447-5447.**

LOW-FAT FOOD IN RESTAURANTS -- Health-conscious consumers now can find several low-fat foods in fast-food restaurants, says **Beth Reames**, a nutritionist with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. "These menu items, along with nutrition information on the amount of fat, calories and nutrients, make it easier to follow the general health recommendation to consume less fat." Such new items include grilled or broiled chicken sandwiches, low-fat frozen yogurt cones, milk shakes & sundaes. Reames suggests ordering sandwiches made without mayonnaise or less mayonnaise to cut fat & calories even more. **Contact: Beth Reames (504) 388-4141.**

RABIES VACCINE TRIAL -- USDA is proposing to field test in Pennsylvania a genetically engineered wildlife rabies vaccine. In the trial, the rabies vaccine, which was developed by genetic engineering, will be put in a bait that is especially attractive to raccoons -- the primary reservoir of rabies on the Eastern seaboard. In lab tests, raccoons that ate the vaccine-laden bait become immunized against rabies. USDA will hold a public hearing on the proposed field trial in Harrisburg, Pa., Nov. 14. **Contact: Anita Brown (301) 436-5931.**

RICE PRODUCTION UP -- Total U.S. rice production -- at 158 million hundred-weight -- will be up 2.3 percent this year. The entire increase will be in medium grain rice. Long grain rice production will be about the same as last year and short grain rice production is going to be less than last year. Rice stocks will remain tight because for the fifth straight year, U.S. production is expected to fall short of use. **Contact: Janet Livezey (202) 219-0840.**

U.S. & MEXICO SIGN ACCORD -- USDA & Mexico have agreed to begin sharing ag market news data. The five-year agreement provides for the two countries to exchange experts & expertise in gathering & disseminating ag market info & to develop procedures to exchange ag market news data between the two countries. It focuses on fruits, vegetables, livestock, meat, grain, specialty crops, poultry & dairy products. **Contact: Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179.**

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES -- USDA & the U.S. Department of Interior have agreed to work with Tread Lightly, Inc., a national organization to promote environmentally responsible use of off-highway vehicles on public & private lands. Tread Lightly will focus its efforts on educating the public about the proper use of off-highway vehicles & other types of back-country transportation on public & private lands to minimize the impacts to the environment. **Contact: Marty Longan (202) 475-3777.**

PROTEIN VS. YIELD PUZZLE IN SOYBEANS -- The deadlock between high yield & high protein content in soybeans finally may have been broken, a USDA scientist says. **Joseph W. Burton**, a USDA plant geneticist, is on the verge of breeding a soybean variety with a 3.4-percent increase in protein. It also has excellent yield. This protein increase -- from 42 to nearly 46 percent, could mean \$1.00 to \$1.50 per bushel in extra revenue for soybean growers, says Burton. **Contact: Joseph W. Burton (919) 737-3171.**

WE'RE EATING MORE TURKEY -- According to statistics from the National Turkey Federation, turkey consumption has climbed steadily since 1930. In 1930, each person in the U.S. was eating 1-1/2 pounds of turkey per year. By 1960, that figure had steadily climbed to 6.1 pounds per year. In 1980, it was 10.4 pounds per year. The National Turkey Federation projects that we'll each eat nearly 20 pounds of turkey in 1991! **Contact: National Turkey Federation (703) 435-7209.**

INNOVATIONS IN FOOD INDUSTRY -- McDonald's in Moscow & Wendy's in the Persian Gulf, supper in the supermarket & fewer, but larger stores as corporations merge -- these innovations in the industry have changed the way food retailers do business. Retailers are also reviewing their internal operations, addressing consumer concerns & educating them about their systems to maintain the quality & safety of food. Because of their large volume, supermarkets, rather than other food stores, continue to have the greatest economic impact on the retail food industry. They represent only about 10 percent of the number of stores, but they account for nearly 70 percent of all sales. Their economic performance is measured by comparing prices & profits. **Contact: Kathryn Lipton (202) 219-0313.**

REMEMBER THIS ONE? The Spring-Summer 1990 issue of "Media History Digest" reprints the instruction plate for a "Gitzensnorker:" "Der Gitzensnorker is nicht fur gefingerpoken and mitten grabben is schappen der springenwerk, blowenfuse und poppen-corken mit spitzensparken. Ist nicht furgewerken by das dumnpokfen."

CHANGING CHANNELS -- Beginning Saturday, Nov. 17, USDA TV's Saturday satellite feeds will be sent on transponder 12D (channel 23), rather than transponder 10D (channel 19). There will be no change in the time of the feed and no change in the other two weekly feeds on Thursday & Monday -- both are on Transponder 12D (channel 23).

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1743 -- Twelve Iowa farmers get a first-hand look at collective farming in Southern Russia. On this edition of Agriculture USA, **Brenda Curtis** talks with **Jerry Perkins** of the Iowa Corn Growers Association about his visit to the Soviet Union. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1224 -- It's turkey time; turkey labels; foreign investment in the U.S. food market; adequate insurance coverage; building our American communities. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1732 -- USDA News Highlights; CRP payments; life in the rural USSR; China's oilseed production; biocontrol & root destroying nematodes. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1344 -- Genetically-engineered cotton; high protein/high yield soybeans; kenaf as a feed crop; kenaf goes commercial; biocontrol -- slow but permanent. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Nov. 13, farm labor; Wed., Nov. 14, crop/weather update, livestock/poultry outlook, horticultural products exports; Thurs., Nov. 15, fruit outlook; Fri., Nov. 16, milk production; Mon., Nov. 19, wheat outlook, cattle on feed, catfish.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

(Week of Nov. 1, 3 & 5)

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on sustainable Soviet agriculture; Will Pemble takes a look at a national seed storage laboratory; Mike Thomas, University of Missouri, takes a look at mirror molecules.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA Meteorologist Ray Motha gives latest weather & crop update; Marvin Norcross on the recent international codex committee meeting on residues; USDA Economist Roger Hoskin on oil crops; USDA Economist Leland Southard on livestock & poultry; Steve Plotkin, Office of Technology Assessment, on use of alternative fuels; USDA Economist Sara Short on dairy; USDA Economist Nathan Childs on ag outlook.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Deboria Janifer reports on USDA's dietary analysis program; Pat O'Leary reports on the price & supply of a turkey dinner.

Available on Satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)
SATURDAY 10:30 - 11:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 10D (Channel 19)
MONDAY 8:30 - 9:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)

OFFMIKE

CANOLA ACREAGE...has increased substantially in Michigan. **Karl Guenther** (WKZO, Kalamazoo) says 10,000 acres were planted this year, up from only 100 acres in 1987. The crop is being sold to processors who make products containing polyunsaturated fat. Karl says the state's apple industry experienced smaller sized apples this year due to cold temperatures during Spring. It also affected grape production -- quantity was down, but quality up.

HARVESTS...of corn, sorghum and cotton are nearly completed in northern panhandle of Texas, says **Larry DeSha** (KGNC, Amarillo). Yields are good considering growing conditions this year. Larry says the station sent **Bob Givens** to Ft. Worth to cover the Cattle Feeder Conference. Theme this year is Focus on Tomorrow. Larry says cattle producer optimism is high, reflecting market prices, while grain producers in his region are expressing concern about income under the new farm bill.

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SOYBEAN YIELDS...were below expectations due to flooding earlier this year, but rated fair to good in the area served by **Roger Flemmer** (KFAB, Omaha, Neb.). Thanks to timely rains corn yields were good for both irrigated & dryland production. Chinch bug in southern sections of the state has reduced sorghum yields.

NEW VOICE...at KFYY/Meyer Broadcasting, Bismarck, N.D., is **John McCloud** from KTHI-TV Fargo. He joins farm director **Al Gustin**, who next month leads a farm tour to Australia. Al says the station's traditional two-day Ag Expo trade show is being expanded to a nine-day stock show, rodeo and trade show. Dates are Feb. 8-16.

CONGRATULATIONS...to **Ray Wilkinson** (WRAL-TV/Tobacco Radio Net, Raleigh, N.C.) who has earned the Governor's Award for service to agribusiness, and for induction into the Hall of Fame by the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters. He joins such famous Tarheel broadcasters as **Charles Kuralt** & **Andy Griffith**.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division